

No Rain

by West

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>By: Skylar "West" Ryans<br>A spin-off of the (somewhat) crazy adventures of our Newsies eGroups list. Six listies + twenty or so newsies = mayhemâ€¦I pity poor Kloppman.

><br>Author's Note: Anything in ( ) is a note within the context of the story. Anything in [ ] are notes from ME, the author.

><br>Stephanie "West" O'Brien squinted in the bright light. It was about 7 a.m. on a Saturday morning and she had just woken up. West sat up for a second, then collapsed back into bed and closed her eyes again. A sudden trembling of the earth caused her eyes to fly open. Earthquakes were a normal thing to happen in the San Fernando Valley in California, but being a native New Yorker, she had never quite gotten used to them. And this one was different from the others. Things were falling off her bookcase and desk. Her blinds had closed themselves, and her bed was creaking loudly. Suddenly it all stopped and there was a crash of thunder, followed by a downpour of rain, then everything seemed to melt away. West began to feel raindrops splashing on her head. Her eyes flew open again and she found herself in some alley. But somehow everything seemed familiar in a sense of deja vu. She noticed a discarded newspaper next to one of the trashcans on her right and she glanced at the date.

> "September 3, 1899...1899!" she muttered. Suddenly a low moan came from her left and she glanced over. A girl was lying there, obviously in pain. The girl sat up and glanced around, still clutching her head.<br> "Who are you?" she demanded.

> "I'm West, who are YOU?" West asked.<br> "Wait, wait. The West? As in, Freakita?" the girl asked, confused.

> "Holy crap! Owl!" West shouted.<br> "Um, anyone want to explain anything to me?" a voice came from the end of the alley. "So let me

get this straight. You're Owl, you're West. What're you doing here?" the voice asked.

> "Just wondering, who would that make you?" Owl asked.<br> "That would make me Monday."

> "And that would make ME Song Bird." Another voice cut in.<br> "Aw, too many people. You're all making my head ache!" Owl complained, sitting on a crate.

> "Okay, wait. Before we all get into this, are there any other mystery people here?" West asked.<br> "Yeah, me. I'm Spot."

> "And me, Copper."<br> "That it? Me, Owl, Song Bird, Monday, Spot, and Copper?" West asked.

> "That's it." Copper confirmed.<br> "Maybe I missed something, but what're we doing here?" Spot asked.

> "I have no idea. All I know is my head hurts. A lot. I think I have a concussion." Owl whined.<br> "Last thing I knew was that I was in bed, trying to sleep, when I was rudely awakened by an earthquake and then I just kind of ended up here." West said, yawning.

> "Same here. And it's not exactly normal to have earthquakes in Ohio." Monday said.<br> "Or in Massachusetts." Owl added.

> "And the only connection between us is that we're all on the newsies eGroups list. It's cool to meet you guys, by the way. Sucks about the conditions, though." Copper said.<br> "What sucks about it? We're in freaking 1899!" West exclaimed.

> "Since when?!" Song Bird exclaimed.<br> "Um, since we've been here." West replied.

> "And you failed to bring this to our attention because..." Spot trailed off.<br> "Oops." West said sheepishly.

> "Well, we have two options here," Monday said, "We can think about this logically and calmly and figure out what to do, or we can be freaks and run off in any random direction in search of the Newsboys Lodging House."<br> "I'm all for acting like a freak." Owl said.

> "Me too." Spot piped up.<br> "Freak sounds good to me." Copper added.

> "Ditto." West said.<br> "What about you, Song Bird?" Monday asked.

> "Acting like an insane freak sounds like the best option to me." Song Bird concluded. So they all got up and began walking quickly in the direction they thought the Lodging House would be in. Well, everyone except Owl, who was still lagging behind complaining about her so-called "concussion". ;-)<br>

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>It was still raining when they reached the Newsboys Lodging House. That was then they realized they were still wearing the cloths they fell asleep in, which was mostly pajama pants and T-shirts. They were all also soaked because of the rain.<br> "Thankfully none of us are wearing white shirts." West commented. Everyone just gave her "the look".

> "What?!" West asked.<br> "You have a very sick and random mind." Monday said.

> "What about you and your random evil laughter?" West shot back.

[\*muhahahahahaha\*]<br> "You guys, who cares. These cloths are probably more normal then anything else we would have been wearing. Let's just go inside." Copper said. Spot raced for the door and was the first one in. She marched up to the desk where Kloppman was

trying to give Kid Blink his mail, settle a dispute between Snipeshooter and Racetrack, and keep Tumbler from killing himself by sliding down a non-sanded banister. He succeeded in doing only one of those three things. Blink's mail went flying, Race and Snipeshooter continued yelling, and Tumbler landed safely on the ground. By the time that Blink got his mail and Kloppman broke up the fight between

Snipes and Race, all six girls had come in and were waiting patiently by the front desk. A very tired looking Kloppman came over and asked the girls, "What can I do for you fine ladies?"

> "We understand fully that this is a Lodging House for boys, but we REALLY need a place to stay." Owl piped up. Kloppman glanced at them, then smiled.<br> "Well, we've outta bunks but if you don't mind sleeping on the floor, then I'm sure you can stay. I think I have cloths that will fit all of you too." Kloppman said and disappeared into the back room, looking for cloths. West glanced at the other girls. Owl was staring intently at Kid Blink who had looked up from his mail and was staring back at Owl. Monday was looking curiously around while Spot had begun to talk to Tumbler. Song Bird had her mouth hanging open and was staring at Spot Conlon who had just come in, and Copper was attempting to get West's attention. Unsuccessfully, I might add. Just then, Kloppman came back in with a pile of cloths.

> "This stuff should fit you guys. Bring it up to the bathroom and sort it out. The boys are in the bunkroom, so just introduce yourselves when you're done." So the girls trooped upstairs to divvy up the cloths. In the end, Owl, Spot, and Copper all had those funky knee-length shorts, shirts, and newsie hats, while Song Bird, West, and Monday had gotten normal solid-colored pants, white shirts, newsie hats and suspenders. There was a big fight over the suspenders, but in the end it was argued that West was the only one who was short enough for the small pair, Song Bird was the only one tall enough for the long pair, and Monday just wouldn't give up the fight. So after all that, they boldly walked into the bunkroom and their jaws promptly hit the floor at the sight of all the newsies they had been seeing in The Movie for so long. All six of them just stood there like idiots, before Copper finally came to her senses and said, "Um, hey."<br> "Who're you?" Jack asked, rudely.

> "Soon-to-be-newsies and your new roommates." West said.<br> "You got names?" Jack asked, a little more politely this time.

> "I'm Song Bird, that's Monday, Copper, Owl, West and Spot."<br> "Spot? Someone already has that name." Boots said.

> "Well, tough. It's my nickname and I don't plan on changing it." Spot said stubbornly.<br> "Yeah, well it's my name too, and I've been here longer than you." A voice spoke up. The voice belonged to THE Spot Conlon [LOL @ Owl] who was now striding across the room to where the girls were.

> "Um, you guys. It's JUST a name. Both of you can chill." West spoke up.<br> "Well I'm Jack Kelly, kinda the leader of these here newsies." Jack said. "And that's Spot Conlon leader of Brooklyn, that's Boots over there."

> "And I'm Kid Blink." Blink spoke up, looking strait at Owl.<br> "Me name's Racetrack Higgins, the...uh..."

> "Compulsive gambler?" West put in. Everyone broke into laughter, while Race tried to figure out how she had known that. Slowly, Jack and the others introduced them to everyone, even the people who had been dancers with no lines in the movie like Snappy, Tumbler, Patrick, and Garret. (What talent, we named them!) With that all said and done, all the newsies went back to whatever they were originally doing and the girls drifted away to various groups in the room. Owl had begun a game of Egyptian Ratscrew (And no, she doesn't know why it's called that), Song Bird had gotten herself next to Spot (the newsie) and was now talking about god-knows-what with him, Copper was off in La-la Land (my way for saying she was day-dreaming), Spot (the girl) had finally settled her fight with Spot (the newsie) over names (she would go by the name of J.B., which was her character in the NewsiesTitanic crossover), and West and Monday were alternately

playing Spit with Bumlets and Racetrack. Later that night, Jack brought up a good point.

> "If you girls plan on becomin newsies, you should probably get someone to show ya the ropes. Just until you're used ta everythin."

He said.<br> "Someone? Like who?" J.B. asked curiously.

> "Uhhh, Kid Blink can help out Owl, J.B. can go with Mush, Copper'll be with me, Bumlets will be wit Monday, Song Bird and Boots'll be togedda, and Race will be wit West." Jack said slowly. So, with that settled, everyone settled into bed (or the floor, in our case) and one by one, fell asleep.<br>

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>"BOOTS, SKITTERY, RACE! GET UP, THEY SLEEP THE DAY AWAY, THESE NEWSIES. THE PRESSES ARE ROLLIN'!" Kloppman yelled. Owl groaned and buried her head back in her pillow.<br> "Lemme alone, Kloppman." she mumbled. "Wait! Kloppman! Huh?!" she said suddenly confused.

> "Earthquake, rain, 1899, Lodging House, selling papes." J.B. explained unenthusiastically as she tried to get in a couple more minutes of sleep. She only succeeded in getting a couple more seconds because Mush promptly pulled her to her feet. She stood there for a couple seconds, tottering and in great danger of falling down and going back to sleep. But J.B. soon came to her senses and began to get ready, grumbling all the while. Monday was already up and ready, Copper was still sleeping soundly, Song Bird was dragging herself out of bed, West was pretending to get up when Kloppman walked by but as soon as his back was turned, she went back to sleep. Kid Blink was attempting to get Owl out of bed, but she was pretty much hopeless.<br> "What time is it anyway?" West asked.

> "Too early to get up." Owl mumbled. West picked up her pillow and hit a still-sleeping Copper over the head with it.<br> "What the...?" Copper grumbled sleepily. West moved on to her next victim and was about to hit Song Bird but was smacked in the back of the head by Owl's pillow. West hit Owl back and...yup, you guess it. Pillow fight. Tumbler, Boots, Snipeshooter, and Patrick all rose to the occasion and joined in. Feathers were flying, there was confusion everywhere, yup, this is what happens when you let six insane listies into your house. "Chaos. Panic. Disorder. My work here is done." Okay, back to the story. Kloppman eventually got everything back to order and all of us got ready and headed for Newspaper Row.

> "Ain't it a fine life?" Owl laughed.<br> "Carryin' the banner through it all!" Monday exclaimed. And all six girls broke out into song.

>"A mighty fine life!<br>Carrying the banner tough and tall!

>Every morning we goes where we wishes,<br>We's as free as fishes,

>Sure beats washing dishes.<br>What a fine life,

>Carrying the banner home-free all!" <br> All the girls dissolved into laughter and all the newsies were giving them weird looks.

> "Nice song." Kid Blink said, giving the girls a "remind me to stay away from insane people" look [Ha! Sweetwaters!]. The bell began to sound so everyone headed through the gates and lined up. Jack was first, as always.<br> "Da usual." he said. What? No wisecracks about Weasel? Leave it to Copper do that for him.

> "Mornin' Weasel!" Copper exclaimed happily. Weasel just glared at her and asked, "How many?"<br> "Fifty papes." she said and grabbed her papers. So, everyone got their papers and split up to go sell with the newsie they had been "assigned" to.

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><br>Song Bird groaned as she thumbed through the newspasper. The headlines read "Open Door Policy Keeps Trade With China Open To All" and "John Thurman Invents Motor-Driven Vacuum Cleaner."

> "Big Whoop." She muttered unenthusiastically.<br> "C'mon!" Boots yelled at Song Bird. She was still lagging behind and at this rate they would never get to his "spot."

> "How are's we gonna sell papes with these headlines? They suck." Song Bird said miserably. Boots was about to ask what the word "sucks" meant but thought better of it.<br> "Improve da truth." he said simply. Song Bird wrinkled her brow in thought.

> "New trade policy with China causes great scandal in America!" Song Bird yelled. "Anyway, it ain't lyin', it's just improvin' da truth." I just had to quote that. I'm sorry. I really am. Not. Great, now you got me sounding like Owl. Oh wait. The story. Right. A couple guys came over and bought papes so Song kept with that headline, changing it just slightly every time. She finished selling her forty papes way before Boots so she helped him out and hawked a few of his. <br> "Hey Boots!" someone called. That someone was Spot Conlon.

> "Hey Spot, what ya doin' on dis side a' da bridge?" Boots asked.<br> "Runnin from da bulls. Wasn't me fault I broke a store window with me sling shot." Spot said trying to seem innocent. Yeah, like Spot could ever come off as innocent.

> "What makes you think you finally outran da bulls?" Song asked.<br> "Why you askin?" Spot asked suspiciously.

> "Cause 'ere come a couple coppers now an' dey look pretty pissed." Song remarked. Spot glanced in the direction she was indicating, did a double take and then yelled, "Cheese it! It's da bulls!"<br> "Like that wasn't obvious." Song Bird said sarcastically as she dashed after Spot. The two of them raced through the streets, smashing into people and dodging market stands. They skidded through an alley, but Song failed to notice a smashed crate and she skidded on the wood, tumbling to the ground.

> "Crap!" she yelled for lack of a better word. Spot skidded to a stop, glanced at Song, then at the quickly approaching cops, and then at the end of the alley. He cursed at himself and sprinted back to Song and helped her up. Unfortunately, both lost their balance and fell to the ground just as the cops reached them. They were promptly arrested and brought to the refuge. <br> "I thought this place got shut down." Song grumbled.

> "Well ya thought wrong. Snyder got put in jail, but this place just got taken over by Warden Kendall, an' he's woise den Snyder."<br> "Names." a fat jail guard asked the cops.

> "Aidan Conlon and I dunno the goils name." The cop said. <br> "Aidan?" Song asked laughing. Spot just glared at her.

> "What's ya name, goil?" the guard asked. Song glared at him, she didn't appreciate being called "goil." <br> "Jamie Marie." she said shortly. She figured that no matter what they wouldn't be able to find any records of her, so she might as well tell them her real name. The cops left and the two more guards came in.

> "We got too many people in dis place. You'll hafta put 'em both in one cell." The guards nodded and escorted Spot and Song to the cell, which they were graciously shoved into. <br> "Nice meetin ya too." Song said sarcastically to the guards.

> "This is poifect. Just poifect. 'Cause a' you I get caught by da bulls." Spot said angrily. <br> "Cause a' me?" Song asked incredulously, "Correct me if I'm wrong, but you're the reason the bulls was chasin us in da foist place."

> "I coulda gotten away if it were't for you fallin." <br> "Nobody made you come back an' help me."

> "You woulda gotten caught oddawise, an' dat woulda made me look bad." Spot said. <br> "Well we wouldn't want to tarnish your poifect reputation now would we? And anyway, it doesn't matta whether I'm caught. Dey got nuthin against me, I didn't do nuthin." Song said

triumphantly.

> "Helpin out a known criminal counts as something, doesn't it?" Spot asked, smirking.<br> "I was talkin' wit ya. Dey can't keep me in jail for dat. And a known criminal? Just how many things dey got against ya, anyway?"

> "A lot."<br> "Care to expand on that?" Spot sighed.

> "Damage of property. Theft. Assault. Inciting a riot. Resisted arrest. Ya want me ta go on?" Spot asked bitterly. Song let out a low whistle.<br> "Damn." She said softly.

> "No kidding."<br> "When did all this happen?" Song asked curiously.

> "Damage of property when I broke da window, theft 'cause I stole some food, assault 'cause I got in a fight wit some hoity-toity scabba, inciting a riot durin' da strike, and resisted arrest every time I gots caught."<br> "None a' dats too bad."

> "Enough ta keep in da refuge for a loooong time." Spot said sorrowfully. Changing the subject Song asked, "What kinda name is Aidan, anyway?"<br> "What kinda name is Song Boid?" he shot back.

> "It's a nickname."<br> "Aidan is Irish. I'm Irish. Spot just me newsie nickname."

> "Oh." She hadn't expected him to actually answer the question.<br> "What didja say ya name was? Jamie Marie?" Spot asked.

> "Yup."<br> "Dats a nice name." Spot said thoughtfully. Song laughed.

> "Well, Aidan ain't too bad of a name eidda. By the way, what do ya think happened ta Boots?" <br> "Hopefully, 'e got away and is tellin' the odda newsies ta come an' break us outta 'ere." Spot said, glancing at the barred window.

> "Hopefully." Song repeated.<br>

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> Owl shifted her papes to the other hand. She had always thought that being a newsie wouldn't be that hard. Apparently she was completely wrong. No one wanted a paper, they were in too much of a rush. The headlines were horrible, and not even a vast amount of "improvin' da truth" would make them any better. Thankfully, the fact that Kid Blink was selling with her made it all worthwhile.<br> "So, I finally finished selling my papes, where do we head out to now?" Owl asked Blink. Blink squinted against the bright light of the sun and shrugged.

> "Wherever you wanna go...we cin go ta Tibby's if you're hungry, or Central Park if you jist wanna hang around."<br> "Central Park sounds good." Owl said eagerly. Maybe she'd be able to re-create some of the things that happened in The Series...hey, it could happen!

> The two walked through the park slowly, just talking and having fun. Finally Owl got up the noive...er nerve and said, "Do ya think you's could do me a favor and kiss me?" Blink looked surprised but smiled happily and leaned forward. Owl closed her eyes and prepared herself for what she hoped would be a very nice kiss and then...nothing happened. Owl opened her eyes angrily to find herselfâ€¦in the middle of no where. Literally. All around her was nothing to be seen except dull brown soil and a few blackened, dead trees.<br> "Uhhh, what the hell?" she said unhappily.

> "My thoughts exactly." Monday, who had just appeared, replied. Owl turned around to find West, Copper, and J.B. all standing there, all looking rather dismayed. <br> "Wonder where Song is." J.B. said, clearly puzzled.

> "The lucky chunte didn't get warped into another world like we did, I guess." West said.<br> "Chunte?" Copper asked laughing.

> "My word for someone you're pissed off at right now or jealous of in this case." West replied flatly.<br> "So...uh...where are we? And

that would be the second time I'm asking that within the time span of 48 hours." J.B. said.

> "I'd listen to the words he'd say, but in his voice I heard decay. The plastic face forced to portray, all the insides left cold and gray. There is a place that still remains. It eats the fear, it eats the pain. The sweetest price you'll have to pay, the day the whole world went away." West said, somewhat absentmindedly.<br> "Ummm, excuse me? Did I just completely miss something?" Copper asked confused.

> "It's a song. By Nine Inch Nails. 'The Day the World Went Away'."<br> "And...?" Owl asked.

> "And nothing."<br> "Then why did you mention it?" J.B. asked, annoyed.

> "This place reminds me of that. That's all. Like something out of...uh oh." West said suddenly.<br> "What uh oh? Uh oh's are never good, don't say uh oh!" Monday said, beginning to freak out.

> "Like sumthin outta...uh...Everworld." West said, with sudden fear in her voice.<br> "Everworld?! What the heck is Everworld?" J.B. asked.

> "In our world, it's just a series of fantasy books. It's a world that shouldn't exist. But does. And has animals that shouldn't exist. But do." <br> "And what's that supposed to mean?" Copper asked.

> "That we're in a really screwed up world and we're gonna die. Did I get that right, West?" Monday said sarcastically.<br> "Pretty much, unless we can find a way out of here."

> "But this might not be Everworld...right?" Owl asked, hopefully.<br> "Might not. Could be a bunch of things. Could be the Nine Inch Nails video for 'We're In This Together' 'cause it looks a hell of a lot like that." West said. Just then music began blaring and surprise of all surprises...the music was Nine Inch Nail's 'We're In This Together'.

> "Okie, that wasn't funny." West mumbled.<br> "Ummm, what do we do now?" Copper asked.

> "Well we have our usual options. Run like hell or think this out carefully." J.B. said. Monday glanced around, noticed a large rumbling of thunder in the distance and remarked,<br> "Okay. We're running like hell. Got that?" Everyone nodded and sprinted as fast as they could. The music had died down and was now completely gone. 'So, we're trapped in some insane world, where SOMEONE can hear ever word we're saying and has decided to get a kick out of this by scaring the crap out of us by chasing us and playing the exact song at the exact time West mentioned it. AND on top of that, I just missed out on a kiss with Blink. Well, this is just peachy', Owl thought miserably. When all five girls finally noticed they were getting nowhere and were still surrounded by desertic land for miles and miles, they stopped and collapsed to the ground, completely out of breath. The only change in the landscape was the sky had darkened into a deep black, not a nice velvety black with little stars scattered all over, just a hard, depressing black that seemed to suffocate the land.

> "And since that didn't work...now what?" J.B. asked.<br> "We...die." West said before bursting into hysterical laughter. Everyone started at her as if she was insane, which she probably was.

> "West...get a grip." Monday said annoyed. West kept on laughing, harder now though.<br> "Oh great. So we have one very annoyed and PO'd Monday, one hysterical and insane West, and three more very scared and irritated people. I'm sure things will work out just great between us." Copper mumbled. West had finally stopped laughing and had apparently taken Monday's advice and gotten a grip.

> "Hey West, just curious, why does everything about this place

remind you of Nine Inch Nails? 'Cause you brought them up twice." J.B. asked, trying to start a casual conversation.<br> "They're one of my favorite bands, and it just so happens that they have two songs that seem to be related to this place, or have a video that takes place in this kind of area."

> "I thought Filter was your favorite band." Monday asked, confused.<br> "They are. Nine Inch Nails is my second favorite."  
> "You guys are insane. Plain out insane. Loony. Off the rocker. Deranged. Abnormal. Just completely insane. Here you are, talking about Seven Centimeter Screws and Freakin' Filters, and we have the freaking' Blair Witch chasin' us for all we know." Owl yelled, annoyed.<br> "It's Nine Inch Nails and Filter, and it's probably not the Blair Witch. Maybe an insane magician or sorcerer with intent to kill us, but not the Blair Witch. That would be too simple. Too kiddy-ish for this screwed up nightmare." J.B. responded. Just then, the heavens decided to open up and rain came pouring down in sheets.

> "Oh great. So now we're scared \*and\* wet. Lovely touch, don't ya think?" Owl grumbled, ever the optimist. West smiled up at the rain. She could just barely see the others in the dim light.<br> "I like rain. It's peaceful." West murmured more to herself than anyone in particular.

> "Hey, you guys? What does bright, white light usually mean?" Monday asked carefully.<br> "Don't go towards the light, Monday!" Owl yelled urgently. Monday slapped Owl topside the head.

> "Not \*that\* light, you moron. I mean \*that\* light." Monday said pointing to a single beam of light no more than ten feet away from where the girls were sitting. The girls skidded through the mud towards the light. Once there, they found two trapdoors in the mud.<br> "One leads to 1899, one leads to 1991. Only four people may go through one door." J.B. read off the stone lying in between the doors.

> "Four...and there's five of us." Copper said, as if it weren't obvious.<br> "I'll go to 1991." West said suddenly. Everyone looked at her, questioningly. "It leads back to 1991, not 2000," West continued, "so it's not like I'll be back in my crappy old life. Anyway, everything I want to accomplish in life, being a successful guitarist, maybe even going to college, I could never do in 1899. So I might as well go back." West concluded. The four girls looked at her strangely and were about to object, but West positioned herself in front of the door leading to 1991.

> "Now or never." She mumbled to herself before opening the door and jumping through it blindly. The door disappeared after her, as if it had never existed.<br>

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> Skylar Xander Wesley opened her eyes groggily. It was another rainy day in Seattle...wait! Seattle?! West cursed silently. Not only had she gone back, or forward, in time to 1991, she had jumped into a completely different life where she was someone else. Different looks, different name, different house, different age, different life. The only thing that seemed to remain the same was her personality and love for The Movie, Newsies.<br>

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>Monday glanced around in the sudden light. They were back in 1899...well atleast she was. She glanced around and noticed she was sitting on the floor of the Lodging House. It was early morning, judging by the fact that everybody was still asleep, but it was just a guess. She quickly got up and picked her way around the sleeping bodies, looking for West.<br> "She's not here." A voice said suddenly. Monday glanced around to find that the voice belonged to



Bumlets.

> "What do you mean?" Monday asked.<br> "Well, you're looking for West, right?" Monday nodded. "Well, she disappeared yesterday and she's still not back." Bumlets replied.

> "But...we disappeared too, right?" Monday asked uncertainly.<br> "Noooo. You haven't gone anywhere. You were here yesterday and you're here today, although I'm not sure where your sanity is." Bumlets said, looking at Monday strangely. She smiled weakly. 'So we were in Everworld-type-place and 1899 at the same time'. Monday thought to herself. Suddenly, Kloppman entered the bunkroom.

> "It's good to know some people get up on time." Kloppman grumbled as he said good morning to Monday and Bumlets. Monday shook her head in pity at the thought of the wake-up call these kids were about to get, courtesy of Kloppman.<br> "BLINK! OWL! COWBOY! GET UP!! COPPER, THE PRESSES ARE ROLLIN'!" Monday cringed. Kloppman, the alarm clock that us guaranteed to get you up or he'll beat your ass with his stick! Um, the story, riiiiiiiiiiight. Monday suddenly realized something was missing. Someone. Someone with the initials JM? Nahhhhhh. But someone was missing (little does Monday know, JM [a.k.a. Song Bird] actually is missing). Boots. Boots was missing. So was Song Bird (the light dawns on Monday).

> "Ummmm, why are we missing three people?" Monday asked aloud.<br> "Well, we know where West is, kind of. Who else is missing?" J.B. asked.

> "Boots. Song Bird." Monday responded.<br> "And Spot. Some a' da boys in Brooklyn told me 'e didn't show up yesterday." Jack added.

> "So...where are they?" Copper asked.<br> "Spot and Song Bird. I don't even want to know where they are [please don't kill me JM!]. But the fact that Boots is missing could be a problem." Monday said.

> "Wait...West is missing?" Race asked, yawning.<br> "Well look who just caught on!" Owl said sarcastically.

> "How did you not notice she was gone?!" Copper asked.<br> "After we finished selling togedda we slit up. She said she was goin' ta Tibby's and I headed to Sheepshed Races...and I got in kinda...uh...late." Race replied, somewhat sheepishly [I feel so unloved, Race didn't even notice I was gone! Wahhhhhh! Well, I never really liked him anyway...right, yeah, sure, just keep telling myself that].

> "So Spot, Song Bird, and Boots are missing. Anyone notice a connection here?" Owl asked. She was met by blank stares. "Oh. My. God. HOW DENSE ARE YOU PEOPLE?!" More blank stares.<br> "Song was selling with Boots. Boots is friends with Spot. Song has a crush on Spot. Coincidence? I think not." The light dawns. Oh yeeeeeeeeeeeeaaaaaaahhhhhh! [\*mumbles\* Morons.]

> "So...then you're saying they're all in the same place?" Mush asked. He's not stupid, really. Some people just catch on later than others...seriously.<br> "Where do you think they are?" Copper asked.

> "Brooklyn?" J.B. asked.<br> "Probably not, how about at Medda's?" Snipeshooter said.

> "Why they would stay there over night?" Jack asked, logically.<br> "Maybe the cops were after them." Kid Blink said, after a pause.

> "Cops...that's it!" J.B. yelled suddenly.<br> "That's what?" Monday asked. She was a bit out of it at the moment. I don't even think she knew what the conversation was about in the first place. Too busy drooling over Bumlets, maybe?

> "The refuge! I bet that's where they are!" J.B. exclaimed.<br> "Bet? Where?!" Race said, springing up from his position on his bunk

and hitting his head on the (unusually) low ceiling. Kloppman walked into the room to see what all the commotion was about and why no one had left yet.

> "What are you guys waiting for? Hell to freeze over? Let's go, the presses are rollin'!" Kloppman barked. As he herded the kids out of the room.<br> "We break them out of the Refuge, tonight." Jack announced as they started walking to the Distribution Center. "J.B., Mush, Copper, and Davey, us five will go. Got that?" the four nodded silently, and moved to the front of the group, into the small mob of newsies heading towards the gates.

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><br> That night, after Kloppman and most of the newsies had fallen asleep, Jack, J.B., Mush, Copper, and David snuck outside carrying a lengthy amount of rope. The walk to the Refuge and the break out were pretty basic and uneventful. Nothing too special. But on the walk home, some \*ahem\* very interesting events occurred. For one thing, they got lost. How people who have lived in this city for as long as they can remember and walk around it every day, can get lost is beyond me. The second interesting thing that happened was that they ran into a listie. Correct me if I'm wrong, but that usually doesn't happen. Irk, I should probably explain how it happened shouldn't I? Don't answer that. Copper and Jack had somehow gotten separated from the rest of the group and were somewhat lost in their own little world when they, literally, walked right into someone. That person fell straight to the ground with a cry of pain. Copper, who was immediately concerned, helped the person up only to find there was something very familiar about her.

> "Eeeek! Trapper!" Copper yelled, scaring the beejesus out of Jack. Trapper scrutinized Copper for a second before recognition flashed through her eyes.<br> "Copper!" Now, by this time everyone else had backtracked a bit to find out what the commotion was about. Which caused even more commotion. But, well, things eventually got fixed and they went home [home being the lodging house]. The End. Wait, wasn't there someone else missing? So, whatever happened to West? Who knows, who cares. Juuuuuuust kidding. Guess you'll just have to wait for the next story to find out! ;-)

> <p><p>

End  
file.